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The situation in the Middle East

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Identical letters dated 12 June 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith information possessed by the official Lebanese authorities on the increase in Palestinian military build-up and mobilization on the northern and eastern Lebanese frontier, broken down as follows:

1. Build-up and activities of Palestinian outposts in the Yanta and Qusaya areas;
2. Activities at Palestinian outposts in the Bekaa;
3. The situation in Palestinian military positions in the Bekaa outside the camps.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, under agenda item 13, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the identical letters dated 12 June 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I. Build-up and activities of Palestinian outposts in the Yanta and Qusaya areas

- On 29 May 2007, starting at 1900 hours, intensified deployment of Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) personnel was observed at the Jubaylat `Ayn al-Bayda, Wadi Hashmash and Jabal al-Mu`aysarah outposts. This continued overnight, concurrently with intensified First Infantry Brigade motorized patrols and temporary checkpoints in the vicinity of these outposts. A 12-barrel covered rocket launcher was set up near the entrance to the Jubaylah tunnel as well as an artillery piece similar to a 106-mm artillery gun. The personnel were also observed to be carrying new M-16 rifles.

- On the night of 30 to 31 May 2007, at 2100 hours, a state of high alert and deployment was observed along the Eastern Range highlands where the Jabal al-Mu`aysarah position is located, overlooking the towns of Ru`ayt, Deir al-Ghazzal, Qusaya and `Ayn Kafr Zabd (about one hour before the International Tribunal was approved). Deployment around the Jubaylat `Ayn al-Bayda tunnel and Wadi Hashmash outposts was also observed. This continued until 0450 hours.

- On 30 May 2007, several contacts were made by PFLP-GC officials with the Bekaa region intelligence branch protesting the Army's stranglehold on their outposts in the central Bekaa, which had aroused their concern despite their being assured that these measures were designed to maintain security for the Army, citizens and the Palestinians alike, and to prevent terrorists from infiltrating and stirring up conflict that might lead to tension in the regional situation.

- On 30 May 2007, at 1530 hours, two white Land Cruiser jeeps and four black Range Rovers with tinted glass, antennae and obscured licence plates entered from Syria travelling in the direction of the Jabal al-Mu`aysarah outpost. They departed on 31 May 2007 at 0320 hours.

- On 30 May 2007, at 1940 hours, two olive-green Toyota Land Cruiser jeeps were observed entering from Syrian territory travelling towards the Jabal al-Mu`aysarah outpost carrying oversized cargo consisting of two olive-green wooden boxes, one of which was 1.5 m by 60 cm and the other 80 cm by 60 cm.

- On 30 May 2007, at 2020 hours, a white GMC ambulance with a Syrian Red Crescent emblem (no. 58131/Rural Damascus) entered from Syrian territory travelling in the direction of Jabal al-Mu`aysarah. It departed at 2230 hours towards Syria.

- On 1 June 2007, at 0130 hours, 31 members of the General Command's "Front Vanguard", as they are known, entered Lebanon from Syria travelling towards Jabal al-Mu`aysarah. They were from the Yarmuk and Suwayda camps and their ages were between 16 and 25.

- On the night of 31 May-1 June 2007, intensive deployment was observed at the Jabal al-Mu`aysarah outpost and on the surrounding hills overlooking Army positions in Qusaya and Deir al-Ghazzal. Deployment at Jubaylat `Ayn al-Bayda and the Wadi Hashmash outpost was stepped up although not intensive.

- Tanks, launchers and general arms continue to be in a state of readiness at these outposts and the personnel protecting them continue to use binoculars to monitor Lebanese Army movements in the area.

- On 1 June 2007, between 0030 hours and 0230 hours, five Toyota jeeps, a Nissan patrol jeep, and a Red Crescent Toyota, transporting individuals, entered from Syria travelling towards Hilwah-Yanta on the illegal Judaydat Yabus road.

- On 1 June 2007, from 1040 hours to 1100 hours, a convoy of 13 Toyota jeeps containing personnel from al-Rawda (Syria) prepared to transport them to Qusaya. They had come from "al-Sab`a Baharat" in Syria.

II. Activities at Palestinian outposts in the Bekaa

- On 3 June 2007, at 1245 hours, as a citizen in a private car was approaching the entrance to Jabal al-Mu`aysarah (after the Army roadblock at that location), he was surrounded by approximately 15 PFLP-GC personnel.

The following movements were also recorded:

- On the night of 2-3 June 2007, from their positions at Jubaylat `Ayn al-Bayda, Jabal al-Mu`aysarah and Wadi Hashmash, PFLP-GC personnel conducted surveillance of Army movements in the region, while maintaining the readiness of the tanks, launchers and general arms at the PFLP-GC `Ayn al-Bayda and Jabal al-Mu`aysarah positions.

- On 3 June 2007, at 0115 hours, the PFLP-GC supplied its personnel at the Jabal al-Mu`aysarah position with approximately 100 gas masks.

- On the same date, at 0900 hours, the PFLP-GC stepped up deployment of personnel in Jabal al-Mu`aysarah, Wadi Hashmash and Jubaylat `Ayn al-Bayda, concurrently with works being done by the Army's First Engineering Brigade, including digging trenches and stations for army transport vehicles along Jabal Tarbul.

- There was build-up and a state of readiness at several Fatah-Intifada positions on the outskirts of Hilwah and Yanta (Khallat al-Sammaqah, Qal`at Idris and Balayit). A vehicle mounted with a four-barrel machine gun was observed in the locality of Khazzan Hilwah, while leaves were cancelled for personnel at all Fatah-Intifada positions and the PFLP-GC position in Lusi.

III. The situation in the Palestinian military positions in the Bekaa outside of the camps

- Palestinian military positions belonging to the PFLP-GC and Fatah-Intifada are deployed in the Bekaa as follows:

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine — General Command (PFLP-GC)

- There are four positions (Jubaylat `Ayn al-Bayda, Jabal al-Mu`aysarah "Qusaya", Wadi Hashmash and Lusi) consisting of tunnels.
- Total number of personnel is 475 on alert.
- They are equipped with various kinds of heavy and medium weapons, rockets and anti-aircraft missiles, in particular in the Jabal al-Mu`aysarah position, where there are tanks, missile launchers and an open road to the Syrian border.
- The PFLP-GC is also deployed in the Na`imah tunnels, with the number of personnel estimated at 200.

Fatah-Intifada

- There are 10 positions, including a position belonging to the al-Sa`iqah organization at Marah al-Wa`arat, deployed in the Wadi al-Aswad, Yanta, Hilwah and Deir al-`Asha`ir areas. These are scattered positions.
- Their total number is approximately 500 personnel on alert.
- They are equipped with various types of weapons: Missiles, mortars, anti-tank weapons (106 mm — B-10) and anti-aircraft weapons.
- Units can be changed over and provisions supplied across the Lebanese-Syrian border, and personnel ensure services. There are no relations with civilians other than herders. Positions are supplied with food by Unimac truck and with water by means of containers. A Syrian cellular line is also used.
- In the wake of the attacks carried out by the Fatah al-Islam group on the Lebanese Army in the North, the PFLP-GC and Fatah-Intifada have proceeded to reinforce their positions. The following has been reported:

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine — General Command (PFLP-GC)

- The Jubaylat `Ayn al-Bayda outpost has been reinforced by approximately 100 personnel wearing uniforms similar to those of the Lebanese Army. The guard at the main entrance and on the hill has been doubled. Anti-aircraft guns were set up (they were subsequently removed).
- Four tanks and eight rocket launchers (12- and 40-barrel) have been set up at the Qusaya position (Jabal al-Mu`aysarah) and aimed west (Rayaq airport and the surrounding area).
- On 21 May 2007, 60 personnel were transported from Syria to Qusaya in three waves.
- PFLP-GC personnel, from their outposts in Jubaylat `Ayn al-Bayda, Jabal al-Mu`aysarah (Qusaya), and Wadi Hashmash, are carrying out surveillance of Army movements in the area, and maintaining tank, launcher and general weapons readiness at the Jubaylat `Ayn al-Bayda and Jabal al-Mu`aysarah outposts.
- On 3 June 2007, the PFLP-GC supplied its personnel at the Jabal al-Mu`aysarah outpost with approximately 100 gas masks.

- On 6 June 2007, at 1230 hours, four trucks, each carrying two vehicles mounted with 40-barrel rocket launchers (eight launchers) were moving from al-Kafir (Syria) in the direction of Qal`at Idris. Some were seen moving in the direction of the Jabal al-Mu`aysarah junction which leads to the Syrian road, but were not seen entering that outpost.